

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 MCT-01 ACDA-07 IO-13 NEAE-00 EB-07 OES-07

AID-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01 COME-00 FEAE-00 INT-05 /114 W

-----121634Z 062311 /50

P R 121427Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4009

INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE 256

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM

CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG

CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER

COMSIXTHFLT

CTF SIX ZERO

CTF SIX ONE

CTF SIX TWO

CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO

FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA

FOSIF ROTA SPAIN

DIA WASHDC

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER

USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 2269

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, MILI, LE

SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION MAY 6-12

REF: BEIRUT 2141 (DTG 051619Z MAY 77)

1. SUMMARY: THIS WEEK AGAIN THERE WAS SHELLING BUT VERY LITTLE
GROUND ACTION IN THE SOUTH. GOVERNMENT ISSUED A DECREE DEFINING
HOW TO IMPLEMENT PROGRAM OF EARLY RETIREMENT FOR SENIOR MILITARY
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OFFICERS. 150 LEBANESE GENDARMES STARTED POLICE TRAINING IN
JORDAN. FONMIN BOUTROS RETURNED AFTER TEN-DAY TRIP TO EUROPE.
BECHIR GEMAYEL WARNED KFUR FRONT WOULD "REINFORCE ITS
PARALLEL GOVERNMENT" IF PROGRESS WERE NOT MADE ON POLITICAL
DIALOGUE. LOCAL OFFICIAL OF BAATH PARTY TOLD PRESS THAT LEBANESE-
PALESTINIAN JOINT COORDINATION COMMITTEE WOULD RESUME OPERATIONS.
SAUDI ARABIA HAS AGREED TO SUPPLY REFINERY AT TRIPOLI WITH CRUDE

OIL.

2. MILITARY ACTIVITIES. THIS WEEK CHRISTIAN FORCES IN QULAYAH AND PALESTINIAN/LEFTIST FORCES IN NABATIYAH EXCHANGED ARTILLERY FIRE MAY 7 AND 8, ACCORDING DATT SOURCES. THERE WAS, HOWEVER, VERY LITTLE GROUND ACTION THIS WEEK. CHRISTIAN FORCES WERE IN DEFENSIVE POSITIONS AND DID NOT APPEAR INCLINED RESUME OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS AT THIS TIME, SAME SOURCES REPORTED. ELSEWHERE, ROUTINE ROTATION OF SYRIAN UNITS CONTINUED (BEIRUT 1839).

3. NEW DECREE ON MILITARY RETIREMENT. ON MAY 9 GOVERNMENT ISSUED LAW AIMED AT INDUCING SENIOR OFFICERS TO RETIRE AND THEREBY BUILDING NEW AND YOUNGER ARMY (SEE BEIRUT 0659). LATEST DECREE INTER ALIA PROVIDES THAT AN OFFICER WOULD BE ENTITLED TO RETIREMENT PENSION AFTER HAVING SERVED 15 YEARS. (PREVIOUSLY RETIREMENT HAS BEEN BASED EXCLUSIVELY ON AGE OF OFFICER, RATHER THAN YEARS OF SERVICE.)

4. LEBANESE GENDARMES IN JORDAN. 150 LEBANESE GENDARMES HAVE STARTED COURSES ON POLICE PROCEDURES AT TRAINING CENTER NEAR AMMAN, LOCAL PAPERS REPORTED MAY 5. ACCORDING TO ISF SOURCE, THIS IS FOURTH GROUP TO TRAIN IN JORDAN, INCLUDING 129 PEOPLE IN APRIL. IN ADDITION, A SMALL GROUP OF DRIVERS TOOK A COURSE ON HOW TO OPERATE SARACEN RECONNAISSANCE VEHICLES TO BE DONATED BY JORDAN.

5. BOUTROS RETURNS TO BEIRUT. FONMIN BOUTROS RETURNED TO BEIRUT MAY 11 AFTER TEN-DAY TRIP TO EUROPE, WHERE HE SIGNED AID AGREEMENT WITH EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY MAY 3 (SEE BEIRUT 2141). HE ALSO DISCUSSED LEBANESE/PALESTINIAN RELATIONS AND AID TO LEBANON WITH FRENCH FONMIN DE GUIRINGAUD MAY 5. DE GUIRINGAUD PUBLICLY REAFFIRMED CONFIDENTIAL

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FRENCH SUPPORT FOR INDEPENDENCE, TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, AND UNITY OF LEBANON, BUT SAID "WE WOULD LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE RECONSTRUCTION OF YOUR COUNTRY MORE THAN WE ARE IN A POSITION TO DO." (EARLIER THIS YEAR FRENCH CITY PLANNERS AND ARCHITECTS VISITED BEIRUT TO HELP PREPARE PLAN FOR RECONSTRUCTION OF CITY'S CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT. IN ADDITION, FRANCE HAS PROMISED TO GIVE 50 BUSES TO BEIRUT MUNICIPALITY.)

6. BECHIR SAYS POSITIONS HARDENING. BECHIR GEMAYEL, COMMANDER OF CHRISTIAN'S UNITED MILITARY COMMAND, TOLD PRESS MAY 10 THAT KFUR FRONT WAS READY "TO ENTER INTO DIALOGUE WITH ANY PARTY WHO CAN HELP UNBLOCK THE PRESENT SITUATION." ECHOING A SPEECH HE MADE ON MARTYR'S DAY, MAY 8, GEMAYEL WARNED, HOWEVER, THAT POSITIONS OF VARIOUS PARTIES WERE "RIGID AND BECOMING MORE SO." HE AFFIRMED THAT CONSEQUENTLY "WE WILL REINFORCE OUR PARALLEL GOVERNMENT CREATED DURING THE WAR" (SEPTTEL).

7. JOINT LEBANESE/PALESTINIAN COMMITTEE TO MEET. SECRETARY GENERAL OF LEBANESE BRANCH OF SYRIA'S RULING BAATH PARTY, ASSEM

KANSO, MET WITH PRESIDENT SARKIS MAY 5. AFTERWARDS, KANSO TOLD PRESS THAT LEBANESE/PALESTINIAN JOINT COORDINATION COMMITTEE WOULD RESUME OPERATIONS, BUT DID NOT SAY WHAT SUBJECTS IT WOULD TREAT. (COMMITTEE, WHICH INCLUDES HIGH-RANKING OFFICERS FROM LEBANESE ARMY AND PLO, HAS NOT MET SINCE 1975.) KANSO ALSO SAID: "IT IS INADMISSIBLE THAT THE PALESTINIAN CAMPS REMAIN MILITARY BARRACKS. WE ARE IN FAVOR OF THE IMPOSITION OF LEBANESE SOVEREIGNTY ON ALL LEBANESE TERRITORY."

8. OIL REFINING OPERATIONS. SAUDI ARABIA HAS AGREED TO SUPPLY CRUDE OIL TO REFINERY AT TRIPOLI, WHICH HAS NORMAL CAPACITY OF 30,000 BARRELS PER DAY, AL ANWAR REPORTED MAY 11. OIL WILL BE SENT BY PIPELINE TO LEBANON'S OTHER REFINERY AT ZAHRANI AND THEN SHIPPED BY TANKER TO TRIPOLI. (TRIPOLI STOPPED OPERATING IN JUNE 1976, BEGAN PARTIAL OPERATIONS IN OCTOBER 1976, AND IS NOW OPERATING ALMOST AT NORMAL CAPACITY. ZAHRANI ALSO STOPPED OPERATING IN JUNE 1976 AND RESUMED OPERATIONS IN DECEMBER 1976; IT OPERATED AT ONLY CONFIDENTIAL

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ONE-THIRD OF CAPACITY IN FEBRUARY 1977, BUT IN EARLY MAY BEGAN PRODUCING 14,000 PARRELS PER DAY ON A NORMAL CAPACITY OF 17,000. LANE

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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